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A  
LETTER  
TO THE  
CRAFTSMAN,  
On the GAME of  
CHESS, &c.

(Price Sixpence.)

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(J. Hervey.)

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On the GAME of  
CHESS.

Occasioned by his PAPER of the  
Fifteenth of this Month.

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*Ludimus effigiem belli, simulataque veris  
Prælia, buxo acies fictas, et ludicra regna :  
Ut gemini inter se reges, ALBUSQUE NIGERQUE,  
Pro regno oppositi, certent bicoloribus armis.*

VIDA.

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L O N D O N :

Printed for J. PEELE at *Locke's Head*  
in *Amen Corner*. 1733.



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A

LESTER  
TO THE

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SILAS W. HOWLAND  
NOVEMBER 8, 1938

CRAFTSMAN

On the Game of

CHESS

Occasioned by his Paper of the  
Fifteenth of this Month.

Indians effugium belli, humilitate ueris  
Prelia, dum uis fletus, et ludus regna:  
U gemitu inter reges, albusque nigerque,  
Pro regno cessat, cunctis bicoloribus amia.  
VIDA.

L O N D O N

Printed for J. P. ... at ...  
in ... 1771



(5)



A  
**LETTER**

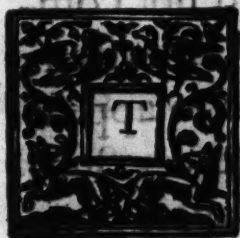
TO THE

**CRAFTSMAN, &c.**

*Slaughter's Coffee-House,*

*Sept. 21.*

**SIR,**



**HOUGH** I am but  
a Scholar at *Chess*, yet  
I have so great a Re-  
gard for the Game,  
and am so piqued for  
the Honour of it, that I was ex-  
tremely

tremely scandalized at some *Reflections* upon it, inserted in your Paper of the Fifteenth ; and cannot help giving you this Trouble, in order to demonstrate to you, that that Correspondent of your's, knows little or nothing of the Subject he pretends to handle.

And to tell you Truth, Mr. *Danvers*, (a Thing perhaps your Ear is as little inclin'd to as your Pen,) it seems to me as if there was a Sort of Fatality attending your Papers, that doom'd them always to treat of what the Writer did not comprehend ; and that the Understanding of your Friends was to appear equally superficial on every Subject ; at least by this Paper, one must conclude you know as little of the Game of *Chess*, as you ever seem

seem to do of the Interest of your Country ; and that you have studied the one in your Leisure Hours, as seldom as you consult the other in your busy ones.

However, whilst this Letter increas'd my ill Opinion of your Parts, it a little softened the very bad one I have always had of your Morals and Veracity ; for though I used to think it impossible your Authors could make such false Representations of Things merely from ill-judging, and that there must have been some Desire to mislead, mix'd with a Propensity to blunder, yet the gross Errors and Mistakes committed in this Letter (in which it was impossible for you to have *any Meaning* or any View but to describe the Game of *Chess*, convince



vince me, that I may have been on other Occasions too hasty in accusing you; that I may often have attributed to want of Integrity, what was really owing to want of better Intelligence; and imputed to wilful Disingenuity, that which was indeed the Effect of involuntary Ignorance.

The absurd, confused Manner in which your Correspondent describes *the Game of Chess*, is really something prodigious; for who is there that had never seen the Game, and only took their Notions of it from his Account, but must naturally conclude, that upon a *Chess-board* there is but *one King* and *one Queen*; and that all the inferior Officers, and subordinate Characters, are so many of this *single King's*

*King's* own Party and Retinue, who give him *Check*, attack him, lay Snares for him, try to block him up, give him all the Trouble they can, and bring him into all the Difficulties there mentioned.

Whereas, in Truth, the *King* at Chess never receives any Annoyance but from Men devoted to the Service of *another King*. They are these only, and not his own Friends, who *check* him, who try to make him shift his Situation, and *change his Places*; and are the Source of every Inconvenience he is exposed to.

But by the imperfect unskilful Account your Correspondent gives of *this noble Game*, one should rather imagine all the while he was

B

talking

talking of *Fox and Geese*; a simple Game that requires very little Genius, and which your Friends, perhaps, Mr. *Danvers*, are more used to play at. At this Game, indeed, there are a Parcel of *little insignificant Animals* that are constantly levelling all their impotent Artillery at *one Object*, whom they often flatter themselves they have enclosed, and defeated, when on a sudden, he breaks from them, puts the whole Tribe of his *Goose-Assailants* to Flight, and remains Master of the Board. But this Game, as you will see presently, differs widely from the *Royal Game of Chess*, tho' it resembles so much more the Picture drawn by your Correspondent.

These



[ II ]

These two Games are so little alike, that they are not so much as play'd at on the same Side of the Board; that of *the Geese* against *the Fox* being always play'd on the *wrong* or *under* Side of the Board; and those who from only having play'd a little at the one, fancy they are equal to the other, would quickly find themselves bewildered if they were to engage at it.

In the Game at *Chess*, there are always (as I have before observed) *two Kings*; one of which your Correspondent (for what Reasons I know not) seems to decline mentioning; he chuses only to speak of *the King* attacked, whilst *that*

*King* for whose Sake he is attacked, he passes over in Silence.

But all Men, of what Denomination soever, that appear on the *Chess-board*, must be lifted in the Cause of one or the other King, for whom, in Reality, they must fight, whether they seem to fight on their own Bottom or not; since the Game can only end by one of those King's being victorious. When therefore the Men of one Party attack those of the other, tho' their Spleen at first may only seem bent against a *Bishop*, a *Knight*, or an inferior Officer; yet if successful in their Attacks on that Servant of the King, they never stop there; they come afterward to think themselves strong enough even to attack *the Queen*, whilst

whilst obliquely and remotely every Stroke they strike, where-ever it falls, is aimed against *the King*, as appears from hence; that the very Moment they carry their Point of removing the King's faithful Friends and Servants from before him, they march directly to him himself; give him *Check*; and if none of his Ministers remain to take these insolent Assailants out of the Way; or to put themselves between their King and Danger, by covering the *Check* given; the Game would be lost; whilst that *melancholly Crisis* your Correspondent talks of would then be really come, and *the other King* remain sole Master of the Field.

But whilst there are strong, able, and active Men of the King's Side  
to



to defend his Cause, there is no Danger of this Misfortune; for if any forward, presuming, sanguine Men, advance farther than the rest of their Party into *the King's Quarters*, and give him *Check*, they are immediately *taken* and *turned out*, are *set aside*, and of no more Consideration in the Game.

*The Knight* (whose Steps, as your Correspondent justly observes, are not of an ordinary Kind, and often surprize Men who oppose him) is of great Use in covering *Checks* of this Nature, and extricating the *King* out of those Difficulties in which his Foes endeavour to entangle him. He is a Man, whom a wise Player makes great Use of in these Exigencies,  
and

and who ofteneft defeats the ſhal-  
low Schemes and thin Artifices of  
unſkilful Antagoniſts.

But if what your Correfpondent  
ſays be true, that *they muſt be*  
*very bad Players who do not*  
*guard againſt the Steps of the*  
*Knight*, What muſt we think of  
thoſe Gameſters, who always aim  
at him, and never hurt him; al-  
ways attack him, and never defeat  
him?

Of the *Tower* or *Rook* your Cor-  
reſpondent tells ſome Truth: One  
may indeed, to ſpeak in the Scrip-  
ture Style (and properly ſpeaking  
conſidering its Situation) call this  
Piece *the Head Stone of the Cor-  
ner*. There are two of them; and  
whilſt they remain firm, *his Ma-  
jeſty*

*jeſty* is ever in Surety : The common Enemies therefore of *them* and *their King*, watch their leaſt Motion very narrowly, and try a Hundred Tricks to decoy them from the *King's Side*, by Feints, false Alarms, Stumbling Blocks, or any other Method that can be contriv'd to divert them from their Duty. Sometimes the Adverſary endeavours to block one of theſe Pieces up with a great many *Pawns* or *Mob*, to make it *uſeleſs* : But on theſe Occaſions when the Tower ſeems thus hamper'd, *the King* extricates his *Piece*, by fetching him on a ſudden round, to the other Side, and ſetting him cloſe to him, by a Motion call'd *Caſtling* ; which leaves the *Tower on the King's Side*, as ready to ſerve him



as if no such Blockade had ever been form'd.

What your Correspondent says of the *Pawns* or *Mob* moving always upon the Square, is absolutely false ; for their common Motion is like that of a *Mad-Dog*, headlong, or right forward, and never otherwise, unless it be to do *Execution*, and then their Motions are so far from being upon the Square, that they never do it but by *stepping awry*.

These *poor weak Pieces* are generally forc'd on by their *Leaders* to save those behind them from being exposed ; they are fet between the better sort of their Party and Danger ; nor is the Loss of

two or three of them much regarded, when they are sacrificed to some greater Personage, who skulks behind them, and escapes himself, by having made them the *Cat's Foot*.

That some of these *Pawns* or paltry little *Fellows* now and then better their Fortunes and their Titles, as your Correspondent observes, is very true; but whenever they do so, it is by going cross the Board to the Side of *the other King*, where they receive whatever Denomination of titular Dignity they think fit. But for one that succeeds in these sort of Enterprizes, there are an Hundred cut off in the Attempt.

What

What is said of the *Bishops*, is most of it your Author's Invention; and by this *anti-episcopal* Representation of them, some People have been apt to imagine your Correspondent a *Scotchman*; But I have stronger Reasons to be of another Opinion, though I firmly believe him to be no good *Englishman*.

As to the Long Ears and Bells he talks of, I never saw any such Things upon the *Bishops* on my *Chest-Board*; how long the Ears of any of your Correspondent's Acquaintance may be, I shall not pretend to determine; but shall readily be brought to credit their being a good deal longer than their *Heads*.



In the next Place, I differ entirely from your Correspondent about the Use the *Bishops* are of; and think them extreamly considerable throughout the whole Game. One Quality too they have, which is peculiar to themselves, and which your Correspondent seems either not to know, or unwillingly to allow; this Quality is, that throughout the whole Game they have a *Steadiness* in their Conduct superior to Men of any other Denomination on the Board; as they never change their Colour, but always pursue the Path in which they set out. A Conduct in which your Patrons, perhaps, Mr. *Danvers* will be as little willing to allow there is any Merit, as they have

have been apt (if there is) to practise it.

As to *the Queen*, she is the highest Piece upon the Board except the *King*, whom every Chess-Player knows to be the highest and supream of all; of the first Consideration there, the original Spring of every Measure taken, and by whom every Man employ'd in his Service is actuated. For the Motions of *the Queen*; you have already been told, that those of the *Tower* or *Rook* are always upon the Square; and that those of *the Bishops* are remarkable for their Steadiness. All her Motions are composed of these two.

And

And having now gone through all the Denominations, Characters, and Motions of the Personages concern'd in this Game, I shall proceed to give you a short Account of *Check-mate*, or the different Ways in which the Game may be lost.

There is one Way of giving *Check-mate* in two or three Moves at the Beginning of a Game; when the King seems in full Prosperity with both his Towers, the Knight and Bishops of his Side; and scarce a Stroke struck. In this Manner young, simple, and unexperienced Gamblers are apt to flatter themselves they can accomplish the King's Ruin; but whenever



ever it is attempted, the least Step of the *Knight* is a full Guard against any Surprize of this Kind.

There is another Way of losing the Game ; which is when the *Affailants* so besiege the *King*, that if he shifted his Situation he must fall into their Hands, and be their Booty ; but being safe, and not in *Check* where he stands at that Time, he has nothing to do, but not to stir, to keep steadily where he then is, and in that Case, those who attack lose the Game ; and in the Midst of all their Snares and Menaces, when they exult most, and think they have him surest, he remains triumphant, whilst his sanguine Adversaries, all of a sudden, find themselves disappointed,

ted, their Hopes frustrated, their Schemes unravel'd, and their Game lost. This Sort of Catastrophe, if I am not mistaken, is called *Stale-mate*, or *Fool's-mate*.

The most fatal Contest at *Chess* (I mean by that the Contest that sweeps the Board the clearest) is when the Gamesters are so equally match'd in Skill and Policy, as well as Force, that the Advantage appears alternately to lean to *each King*; and the suspended Victory remains long doubtful; then the Banks are gradually thin'd on each Side, and Slaughter so busy in both Parties, that even the victorious King reigns over an almost *depopulated Board*. A melancholly Scene even at *Chess*, and a hazardous Con-

Contention in which no wise or prudent Man sure ever desires to see himself, his King, his Kindred, or his Friend engaged.

These being the only Ways I know, or ever heard of ending a Game at *Chess*, I must recur to what I have before hinted, and that is the absurd Manner in which your Correspondent describes the Method of playing at it, by which he seems to be as little acquainted with the true Policy of *Chess*, as with the Characters of the Men concerned in it; for by what I have here told you, Mr. *Danvers*, you see demonstrably, let the Appearances of private Scuffle between *Man* and *Man*, *Party* and *Party*, be what they will, that every Step

D                      taken



taken on the *Chess-board* virtually tends to the Benefit of one or the other *King*. And though one of the *Kings* may be left with only two or three *scrub Pawns*, in some little obscure Corner of the Board, and at a great Distance from the immediate Scene of Action; yet every one of those who are attacking *the other King* are still fighting his Cause, and promoting his Interest; for the Moment they carry their Point, and prove victorious, though *their own King* does not march in Person at their Head and lead them to Battle, yet the Fruit of their Victory is always his, and though *they* conquer, it is *He* triumphs.

And

And now, *Sir*, having set this Matter in a true Light, and troubled you much longer than perhaps you may think such a Trifle as a *Game at Chess* deserves, I will take my Leave; and hope I shall not be thought partial or byass'd in any thing I have said on this Occasion; for though I acknowledge I neither like your Character, your Doctrines, your Principles, or your Conduct, as an *Englishman* and a Member of Society, yet as this Affair cannot possibly in any Point be thought a *political Dispute*, or a Matter of publick Consideration, so you must conclude it is not from Prejudice but Conviction that I assure you this Correspondent appears to

me full as unequal to his Undertaking as any of your others; all of them consequently therefore in my Opinion are alike ignorant of the Subject they treat, whether it be publick or private, ludicrous or serious; they seem to understand Gaming as little as they do Reasoning, to be as bad *Chefs-Players*, as they are *Politicians*, and to be as incapable, from want of Knowledge, of representing Trifles truly, as they are, from want of Candour, of stating any more material Points fairly.

*I am, S I R,*

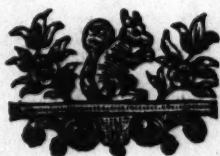
*Your's, &c.*



## P O S T C R I P T.

**I** Believe your Correspondent, in his *Exordium*, if he had pleased, could have informed you of a *Game at Chess* carried on between *Rome* and *London*, as well as between *Rome* and *Madrid*; and where as exact an Account has been given by Letter of every *Motion* on either Side: But perhaps he chose rather to expose the Follies of Foreigners than of his own Countrymen, Friends, and Acquaintance.

F I N I S.



## P O S T E R I O R

I Believe your Correspondent in  
his Exordium, if he had ple-  
sed, could have informed you of  
a Game at Chess carried on be-  
tween Rome and London, as well  
as between Rome and Madrid; and  
where as exact an Account has been  
given by Letter of every Motion on  
either Side: But perhaps he chose  
rather to expose the Follies of Fo-  
reigners than of his own Coun-  
try; Friends and Acquaintance.

T I M I S

